

Preventable causes of death

The **World Health Organization** has traditionally classified death according to the primary type of **disease** or **injury**. However, **causes of death** may also be classified in terms of preventable risk factors—such as smoking, unhealthy diet, and sexual behavior—which contribute to a number of different diseases. Such risk factors are usually not recorded directly on death certificates.^[1]

1 Worldwide

It is estimated that of the roughly 150,000 people who die each day across the globe, about two thirds—100,000 per day—die of age-related causes.^[2] In industrialized nations the proportion is much higher, reaching 90%.^[2] Thus, albeit indirectly, **biological aging** (senescence) is by far the leading cause of death. Whether senescence as a biological process itself can be slowed down, halted, or even reversed is a subject of current scientific speculation and research.^[3]

1.1 2001 figures

Leading causes of preventable death worldwide as of the year 2001, according to researchers working with the **Disease Control Priorities Network (DCPN)**^[4] and the **World Health Organization (WHO)**.^[5] (The WHO's 2008 statistics show very similar trends.)

In 2001, on average 29,000 children died of preventable causes each day (that is, about 20 deaths per minute). The authors provide the context:

2 United States

The three most common causes of death in the **population of the United States** are smoking, high blood pressure, and being **overweight**.^[6]

- Leading preventable causes of death in the United States.^[1] *Note: This data is outdated and was in fact significantly revised in subsequent reports of the leading causes of deaths, especially for obesity-related diseases.*^[2]

1. ^ Cite error: The named reference JAMA2000 was invoked but never defined (see the [help page](#)).

2. ^ Cite error: The named reference Harvard was invoked but never defined (see the [help page](#)).

2.1 Accidental death

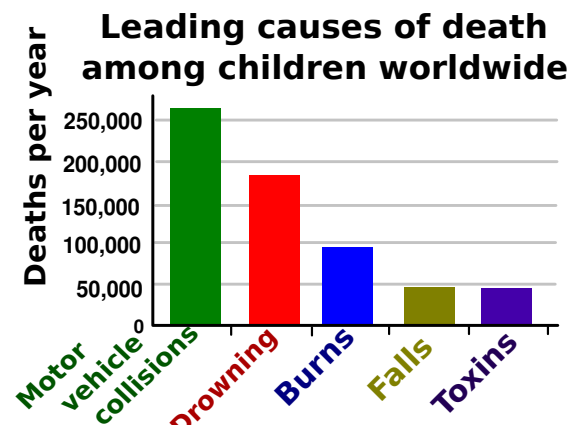
- Leading causes of accidental death in the United States by age group.^[1]
- Leading causes of accidental death in the United States, as percentage of deaths in each group.^[1]

1. ^ ^a ^b *National Vital Statistics Report*, Vol. 50, No. 15, September 16, 2002 as compiled at [1]

2.2 Annual number of deaths and causes

3 Among children worldwide

Various **injuries** are the leading cause of death in children 9–17 years of age. The top five worldwide unintentional injuries in children are as follows:^[14]



Leading causes of death by injury among children worldwide.^[14]

4 See also

- List of causes of death by rate
- Preventive medicine
- Public health

5 References

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